

CARING FOR THE CARERS - **An Online Mental Health Support Portal**

“C4C”

A national platform dedicated to caring for healthcare service providers on the frontline of the fight against COVID-19

A draft proposal and framework

Concept development -
University of Pretoria & Brand South Africa

30 April 2020



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The logo for Brand South Africa, featuring the text "South Africa" in a white script font over a stylized graphic of the South African flag's colors (green, yellow, red, white, blue) forming a chevron shape.

South Africa

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Section 1

PURPOSE & BACKGROUND



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Section 1 - Purpose & Background

Background

As the COVID-19 pandemic unfolds, it is clear that health care professionals around the world, and for that matter, every person involved in the health ‘value chain,’ from porters, to ambulance emergency personnel, to doctors, to administrative staff at healthcare facilities are exposed, vulnerable, and often have to function under severe stress.

The Ultimate Goal/Purpose

of the proposed national C4C platform and initiative is to...

Support and enhance the mental wellness of healthcare providers in both the public and private sector, via online psychological counselling, coaching and aligned resources



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Section 2

RATIONALE FOR THE C4C PLATFORM



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Section 2 - Rationale

Problem identification:

- During the first week of April, Prof Derick de Jongh, Director of the Albert Luthuli Centre for Responsible Leadership at the University of Pretoria, together with a small team under the leadership of Prof Tanya Heyns at the UP Faculty of Health Sciences, reached out to Brand South Africa regarding feedback and engagements the university had with health care practitioners.
- It was indicated by health practitioners that due to the COVID-19 outbreak, health care practitioners around the world, and in South Africa, will be faced with severe stresses, psychological and emotional challenges.



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Section 2 - Rationale

Motivation and rationale for a national C4C platform:

Brand South Africa and the University of Pretoria scanned the market and established that while there are some provincial, or institutional counselling and/or psychological support platforms available to health care practitioners, no such integrated and comprehensive platform exists at national level.



Section 2 - Rationale

With the above in mind, University of Pretoria engaged with Brand South Africa on the possibility of designing a national platform that can provide an integrated comprehensive support programme for our Healthcare Workers.

The proposed C4C platform will provide:

- a. A call centre facility where health care practitioners can access counselling, psychological/emotional support;
- b. A platform through which messages of motivation, and content focused on supporting health care practitioners during challenging times can be channelled directly to relevant stakeholders and audiences.



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Section 3

PROPOSED DESIGN AND FRAMEWORK



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Our portal model:

General Discussion
Room



*Caring for the
Carers*
Online Mental
Support Portal

Resource Centre



Professional
Counselling



Webinars & Training
Mindfulness (session
per session)



General Discussion Room



- Let's connect - no more silo experiencing (Chatroom)
- Open sharing of pain and gain (*WhatsApp group - should be overseen - not just a moaning platform*)
- Peer assistance (Share best practices; Dr Ndjeka DoH and team: Knowledge - link)
- Conveying critical needs and entering the entire network (*remove*)
- Social media "look-and-feel" - instant notification (*remove*)
- **Positive messages / share positive stories from practice**

Professional Counselling



- Access to and booking for emotional and or psychological support via online professionals (including a 24 Hour-Helpline)
- Speak to a “psychologist” / “coach” approach



Resource Centre



- Link to relevant free eBooks and literature
- Self help templates
- Free software and Apps useful to enhance mental wellness / exercises
- **Ideas in following slides**



Resource Centre



A holistic approach to mental health and wellness are situated within the internal dimensions of body, mind and spirit, which is integrated and in dynamic interaction, and affected by the external dimensions, which includes the physical and social environment within which a person lives.

Internal dimensions (self)	Components	Introduction	Information (websites, activities, YouTube videos)
Body	Rest Nutrition Hygiene Self-care Exercise		
Mind	Mindfulness intervention Emotional (affective) Thought (cognitive) and Motivational processes		
Spirit	Religion Culture (religion and cultural beliefs and health beliefs; how do I stay in contact with my family members, begrafnis)		
	Value systems Ethical principles		



Resource Centre



External dimensions	Components	Introduction	Information (websites, activities, YouTube videos)
Social environment	Family Work/Organisation Friends/Community relationships Support systems (healthcare and resources available) List of resources		
Physical environment	Housing Nature Resources and facilities		



Webinars & Training



- Relevant short webinars on critical topics related to mental health (offline or live streaming)
- Skills based online courses (micro modules)
- Health Talk (maybe a full-on live Youtube channel)

Mindfulness intervention (Institute of Mindfulness South Africa: IMISA)

Sessions	Introduction	Activity	Information
Sessions 1 to 8	Start with introduction	Include an activity	Nuggets of information Supportive literature Motivational quotes
Note Participant should start with Session 1 and then continue to session 2, then 3... Response feedback available (questionnaire) Participants should be able to ask questions – e-mail to group who will then respond Own look and feel (IMISA)			



Section 4

NEXT STEPS



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Partners

Current

- Brand South Africa
- University of Pretoria
- Chief Nurse of SA (National Department of Health)

Stakeholders engaged:

- Discovery Holdings (Dr Ayanda Ntsaluba and Dr Maurice Goodmin) - UP
- The Presidency through Minister in the Presidency - Brand SA



Four work streams

Workstream 1

Technical Team:

1. Design & build online platform
2. Maintenance of platform

Workstream 2

Content Team:

1. Development of material/content to carry on platform
2. Maintenance of content (updating, new info etc)

Workstream 3

Establishing a national Psychological Support network

Workstream 4

Communications & Marketing Team: develop communications strategy for three phases:

1. Pre/during development;
2. Launch;
3. Maintenance and levels of interactivity.



Key considerations

- Partners? **Private & Public**
- Portal / platform / hosting / subscription (potentially 1000s of users)? **Maybe Moodle (hosted at own server) coupled with Google Meet Advanced as communication platform**
- Population of professional voluntaries (subscription)? **Forms based**
- Population of resources? **Create relevant structure and categories (don't clutter)**
- Communication plan (DIA)? **Internal and external liaison**
- General management? **The site must be managed and active (a student is perfect)**
- Funding? **The only cost will be the server (if not at UP as well as the student managing the site, below R8000/month) – look for sponsorship model as well**
- Positioning? **At UP / National initiative**
- Use pilot in one region to refine technology and user experience (UX) ?
- Contacts: To introduce the platform

Public hospitals: Cobie Marais: List of contacts; Private hospitals: List of hospitals and contact details; + Chief Nurse of SA; Department of Health as well as through Universities (postgraduate students in clinical practice) and Nursing Colleges

URGENT NEXT STEPS - **by 8 May 2020**

1. Design online platform - UP IT and support from Isak van der Walt (UP) / Prof Alex Antonites
2. Obtain access to network of Psychologists / Psychiatrists and other professionals - Prof Tharina Guse (HOD, Psychology at UP) to assist
3. Finalise content (toolbox) - Prof Tanya Heyns (UP)
4. Finalise marketing and communication plan - Dr Petrus de Kock
5. Finalise 24hour helpline provider - Prof Derick de Jongh (UP)
6. Send proposal to - Prof Derick de Jongh
 - Discovery Holdings
 - The Chief Nurse of SA
 - UP (Including the Principal and Vice Chancellor, Deans of EMS, Humanities and Health Sciences)





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Thank You!

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